

GITA SADHANA

BY
SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA,
ANANDA KUTIR



The Sivananda Publication League,
RIKHIKESH.

SEPTEMBER, 1947.

Price annas four

(Free for members only)

GITA SERIES No. 8.

GITA SADHANA.

The Bhagavad-Gita is a text book of practical Sadhana for one and all down from the peasant ploughing his fields right up to the philosopher of the Advaita Vedanta. It discards no aspect of man, it takes into consideration the different aspects of action, emotion, will and understanding of which man is an embodiment. It is a Brahmavidya and a Yoga Sastra, a theory as well as its practice. It is Krishnarjuna-Samvada, the meeting of the individual and the Supreme. The Gita is not a book of metaphysical theory, but is a guide for the spiritual man in his daily life of conscious self-effort for attaining Perfection. While the path of Pure Knowledge is possible only for the highly cultured

man, the method of the Gita is simple, which is within the reach of all, i. e., devotion to God.

The Gita stresses on the performance of duty without reluctance. There is no need to desist from an action which one has undertaken. Action does not bind the soul and the soul is not affected by any external modification. For, the self is eternal. Death is only a change of body and one has no occasion to grieve at the loss of such a body. The soul exists in the past, present and future in the same condition. One who knows this does not grieve at anything. None can destroy the soul. It is immortal and indestructible: The Soul does not kill anybody and it is killed by nobody. Knowledge of the Self is a wonderful achievement.

One should be even-minded in pain and pleasure. Then one does not incur sin. Man's duty is only to perform action, not to desire for its fruit. Through detachment, one is established in the Yoga of action. Only the fool is attached to fruits of actions.

A Sthitaprajna is one who is established in and satisfied with his own Self. He has no love for anything, he hates none, he fears none. The craving for objects vanishes away on seeing the Supreme. The senses are very powerful. They delude even one who ceaselessly strives to control them. But a Sthitaprajna has all senses under his restraint. Objective attraction leads to final destruction of oneself. He attains Peace who is egoless, who is established in the state of the Eternal.

None can live even for a second without action. Prakriti drives man to action even against his will. He is a hypocrite who meditates on objects but keeps silent physically. He is a man of true renunciation who is detached in the mind. Life cannot be lived without action. But there is no action for him who is sporting in the self and is contented within the self. He has no duty to perform.

If the Supreme Lord does not act, the whole world will dwindle away in no time. The Superior man does action so that others may follow him. Even as ignorant men do

action with attachment, the same thing the wise one should do without attachment, for the good of the world. The wise man should not create disturbance in the mind of the ignorant. Gunas as senses move among Gunas as sense-objects. Thus knowing the wise man is not attached. It is difficult to go against nature. Even a Jnani is dragged by force of Prakriti. The greatest enemies of man are Kama, Krodha, born of Rajas. They destroy goodness and eat away purity. They are the sources of great sins. Knowledge is enveloped by Kama or desire. Therefore, one should destroy Kama, the mighty enemy of man.

He is a wise man who finds action in inaction and inaction in action. He is known as a wise man who has burnt all his actions through wisdom. He is unperturbed by what happens as the fruit of his actions. To him everything is merely Brahman. His actions have no meaning since he sees Brahman alone in everything. Such a Knowledge of Brahman comes through service, surrender and enquiry. Knowledge destroys even the mightiest of sins and even the greatest sinner can attain Supreme wisdom. Knowledge

burns away all actions even as fire burns up fuel. Knowledge comes in the passage of time.

Knowledge and action are not distinct in as much as they both lead to liberation. Action without attachment is superior to total renunciation of actions. It is hard for one to renounce actions. Brahman is easily attained through action without attachment. He is unattached even while doing all actions. He is like a lotus leaf in water.

The Supreme Lord does not give either merit or demerit. It is Prakriti that works as such. Knowledge is enveloped by ignorance, hence the creatures are deluded. But to them the supreme reveals itself, who have removed ignorance through the Knowledge of the Self. They are ever immersed in and are one with That. They see the same Eternal in everything. They have conquered birth and death even here itself.

The pleasure born of the contact of

objects is the womb of future pain. The wise do not rejoice in that. Who is established in the Self, who is rejoicing in the Self, who rests peacefully in the Self, who witnesses the light of the Self, attains the Supreme Brahman.

A real Yogi is one who has renounced thoughts. This Yoga is attained through meditation on the Self. The bliss attained through this meditation is indestructible, unsurpassable, eternal, full of consciousness, beyond the reach of the senses. By attaining this one does not consider any other gain as worth striving after. Established in that one is not shaken even by the heaviest sorrow. That is Yoga which destroys all pains. That is to be practised. One is established in Yoga through Abhyasa and Vairagya. Even if one fails to attain the Goal in this life, he takes another suitable birth to continue the practice, under favourable circumstances. He is guided by his previous Samskaras, and thereby he attains to the Highest.

The Supreme Lord is the Source of all

the worlds. He is the creator, preserver and the destroyer. He is all-in-all. The three Gunas have deluded the whole world and hence it does not know the Supreme Lord. This Maya cannot be overcome except through surrender to the Lord. Such people are very dear to the Lord. Among them the Jnani is the best devotee. For he has no selfish desires. Only after many a birth, one realises that everything is God. All are deluded by various desires. They cannot reach the Lord except through many rounds of births and deaths, which are the effects of their desires.

He who meditates on the Lord and chants OM at the time of death attains the Supreme State. By attaining Him, there is no more fear of Samsara. Even Brahma-loka is a perishable one and from there one has to revert to this mortal world. But after attaining the Supreme Lord, there is no more rebirth.

Heavenly pleasure is not to be striven for. At the end of the merit, the enjoyer

falls down from heaven into this mortal world. But those who are ever thinking of the Lord as their sole Refuge, to them the Lord provides with all that is best. Even those who worship other deities are unconsciously and wrongly worshipping the One Supreme Lord and all such propitiations go to Him only. He is the Overlord of all. He accepts even a dry leaf if offered with devotion. His devotee never perishes. Even women and Sudras are eligible for Salvation provided they surrender themselves to the Lord. This world is impermanent and so one should take refuge in the Eternal Lord alone. The Lord pervades the whole world. There is nothing in which He is not. The whole universe is sustained by a part of Himself.

Bhakti is the central method for approaching the Lord. Only a Bhakta or a devotee can have vision of God. Even the gods cannot have vision of the Supreme without selfless love. Such a pure devotee hates none and is balanced in pleasure and pain. He neither rejoices, nor hates, nor grieves, nor desires. He is not afraid of the world and

the world is not afraid of him. To him censure and praise are equal. He is the same to foe and friend alike. He has abandoned all undertakings. He has crossed over the Gunas.

The Supreme Brahman is indescribable. It is Light of lights and is beyond darkness. It is neither existing nor non-existing. It is pervading everything. It is near and far, subtle and gross. It is seated in the heart of beings as their very self. When one sees that all diversity is rooted in this One, he then becomes fit to become Brahman.

Sattwa illumines a person, Rajas destracts and Tamas makes him inert. Man is a mixture of passion and inertia. He seldom experiences the state of Pure Sattwa. When one perceives that there is no door except the Gunas, he transcends these qualities and becomes Immortal.

The Samsara is like a tree with its roots upwards and offshoots downwards. One should cut at the root of this tree with the axe of detachment. Then one attains that State of

the Supreme where the sun and the moon do not shine, where fire does not have brightness. The greatest light of the world is only a portion of the Supreme Light. Everything of the world is only a reflection or a feeble apology for the Supreme. It transcends all earthly things. It is above Jiva and Maya. That is Purushottama who is sung in the Veda. One who knows this has fulfilled all his duties. He is the wisest man knowing everything.

Men with demonical qualities do not love the Lord. They doubt the existence of God and say the world is only a passion-product. They are proud and egoistic. They are cruel and full of anger. They are bound by hundreds of desires and they live to enjoy. They assert their pride of wealth and fall down to the deep hell after death. They do not attain to the Supreme. Lust, anger and greed are the three gates to hell.

One who mortifies his body without mental discipline is a downright hypocrite. There should be physical, verbal and mental

Tapas or discipline. One should be pure in thought, word and deed. A selfish act is immoral. Selflessness constitutes morality and ethics. Every act should be done with the remembrance of the Supreme Being. Without the consciousness of the Eternal, all actions become worthless.

Sanyasa is renunciation of selfish actions. But one's own duty cannot be renounced. One's own duty is sacred. All actions should be done without the least attachment. One should not renounce an action merely because it is difficult to perform it. Action is not done for the sake of pleasure. Sensual pleasures are sweet in the beginning, but turn to be bitter in the end. They must be renounced. Varnashrama-Dharma is a perfect system and it must be strictly adhered to.

In order to have realisation of Brahman one should resort to seclusion and meditate on the Self. He must detach himself from externality and establish himself in the Supreme Ideal. One must abandon all earthly duties and take refuge in the Eternal. He will thus be liberated from the bondage of sin.

The Gita aims at the perfection of Man in order to become the Divine. The Life of Krishna Himself is the best example of the Gita Ideal of Life. His Life itself is the best and the most satisfactory commentary on the Gita. To be like Krishna is to be a perfect man of the Gita Ideal. To be like this, one has not got to choose to be a devotee, a philosopher, a mystic or a man of action. One has to be all these at once. He may start by becoming any one of them in accordance with his predominant nature, but after some time he will realise that advancement on any one of the so-called paths needs a parallel advancement along all others. There cannot be a one sided expansion of the individual. Perfection in order to be real and lasting should be all-round. To realise the Absolute is to become the Absolute which is the All. One has to be Infinite, for which he has to develop the entire being.

Our minds are the arenas, the inner battle-fields of the daily Mahabharata, where at every moment we are in a war-situation, where one set of ideas fights against the other.

We all, therefore, need the Light, the wisdom and the advice which Lord Krishna bestowed on Arjuna. The Supreme Lord, while discussing with Arjuna the vital issues of life, went to the very root of the riddle of the universe, and revealed such truths as are of universal application. Krishna spoke to the whole of humanity through Arjuna on the eternal verities of existence. Krishna typifies the Eternal and Arjuna typifies man with his imperfections. The instructions of the Gita are meant for man in general and not to a particular individual.

Be in the world. Serve humanity. Love all equally. But be not attached to it. Be detached. Live in the Self. Rest contented in the Self. Have no binding ambitions in life. Serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realise. Surrender yourself to God. This is the gist of the Gita.

Act with the consciousness that all is the Self, all is God. God is man and woman, and the old man tottering on the road. There is no reason for attachment to objects. All

is merely the Self. See your self in every being. Love others as you love your own self. Do not see differences of body. See the common essence inside. Have Akarta-Bhava, Narayana-bhava when you do actions. Action has to be done so long you know that you possess a body. It is the very nature of the body to agitate. Mind will compel you to act. Prakriti is powerful. Even intelligent men are Her victims. Surrender to the Lord is the only way to get rid of the bondage of Prakriti or Maya.

Be a witness to all events in life. Do your own prescribed duty. Serve without expectation of fruits. This is the essence of Karma Yoga.

The Lord is seated in the heart of all beings. He is the Inner Ruler, the Immortal. Run to him alone and take shelter in Him. There is no other way for liberation. All your duties will drop off all sins will be burnt and all doubts cleared when you have unselfish surrender to the Lord.

Control the fluctuations of the mind. Sit in a secluded place and concentrate on the Self. Wisdom will then dawn and destroy all ignorance. The effect is Immortality. Supreme Bliss without decay is the fruit. Eternal satisfaction is the Goal of all aspirations. This is achieved through the Synthetic Yoga explained above. This is what GITA has to say to the human world.

Om Santi ! Santi ! Santi !!



TREASURES OF KNOWLEDGE.

Sayings of Swami Sivananda	...	2	8	0
What becomes to the soul after death		2	8	0
Saint Alavandar	...	1	0	0
Pushpanjali	...	2	0	0
Ethical Teachings	...	3	8	0
Concentration Meditation	...	5	0	0

THE SIVANANDA PUBLICATION
LEAGUE, RIKHIKESH.

GITA, SERIES

1.	Srimad Bhagavad Gita* 18 Chapters	...			
2.	Essence of Gita in Poems*	...			
3.	Gita for Busy People*	...			
4.	Srimad Bhagavad Gita Universal Gospel	...	1	8	0
5.	Bhagavad Gita—one act play		0	8	0
6.	Gita meditations	...	0	5	0
7.	Gita Sadhana	...	0	4	0
8.	Miniature Gita	...	0	2	0

* Out of print.

**The Sivananda Publication League,
RIKHIKESH.**

THE DIVINE LIFE

RIKHIKESH.

*(The monthly organ of the Divine Life
Society, Rikhikesh.)*

A BLESSING FOR ALL SPIRITUAL
ASPIRANTS

Contains° regular instructions from
the pen of Sri Swamiji Sivanandaji
Maharaj and many other great
men of East and West.

Annual Subscription ... Rs. 3.

Foreign ... Sh. 7.

Single copy annas five.